



**Michigan Association of School Nurses (MASN)  
School Nurse Role and Immunizations Compliance  
Informational Hearing Before the Senate HEALTH POLICY COMMITTEE**

October 10, 2013

Senator Jim Marleau and Committee Members,

MASN would like to stress the impact school nursing services can have on immunization compliance when professional registered nurses are working in school districts. Karen Hervey BSN, RN, NCSN, the District Nurse for Saline Area Schools, is here today to talk about one district's proactive efforts to increase immunization rates and the positive outcome that resulted. Among the improvements she was able to document was a decrease in the number of waivers. This initiative required phone calls to the parents who had signed waivers in an effort to find out why. If barriers were identified as the reason for lack of compliance those issues were addressed. Education was also a part of the effort when needed.

According to The Journal of School Nursing (August 2013), school nurses can partner with health departments and other sources to eliminate personal exemptions related to convenience. School nurses can inform the school community about the importance of immunizations through many channels of communication. Education may be one of the best ways school nurses can affect immunization rates. Tracking students that need follow up after required school reports have been filed is another way school nurses make a difference. Providing resources for families and teen friendly clinics all contribute to improved immunization rates.

Michigan, unfortunately, has the lowest ratio of school nurses to students in the country and the nurses we do have are often serving large populations in multiple buildings. This puts those nurses in a position of consultative services rather than direct student care. We at MASN strongly feel that improved access to nursing services in schools and the collaboration that would bring with other health care entities would positively impact immunization rates in Michigan.

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Did it make a difference??

Harvest	19	5
Pleasant Ridge	12	11
Woodland Meadows	12	3
Heritage	6	1
Middle School	64	28
High School	24	10
Alt. High School	1	0
Total:	138	58